

Investing in the Future Nanos: IUPUI Nanotechnology Discovery Academy

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Nanotechnology is a rapidly advancing field that is being applied to many aspects of everyday life. Consequently, it has become crucial to increase the general population's understanding of nanotechnology and its application. To accomplish this, STEMCorp at IUPUI has been assisting INDA with week long summer camps that work to increase high school student's awareness and understanding of nanotechnology. The camp consists of a morning seminars, afternoon lab activities, lab tour, and end-of-camp poster presentation. Lab tours focus on showing participants the practical applications of nanotechnology and exposes them to nanotechnology research occurring in Indianapolis. Afternoon lab activities immerse the students in a hands-on application of nanotechnology, providing a deeper understanding of the concepts introduced in the morning seminars. To assess the effectiveness of the INDA Nanotechnology summer camp, students were given pre- and post-assessment surveys to measure their interest in, and understanding of nanotechnology and STEM fields. Additionally, groups of students were selected for interviews and focus groups to provide a more in-depth understanding of their experience. From these data, it was found that the summer camp was effective at increasing student's interest in and understanding of nanotechnology. Additionally, the student interviews/focus groups identified crucial components to this success.